

PLAIN TALKS

January 1989

Volume 68 Number 1



New Year brings Reddy Referrals Pay

Volume 68

Number 1

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(About the cover). The New Year brings an opportunity for employees to participate in GSU's sales efforts through the Reddy Referrals Pay program. The program, which starts in February, will offer employees cash and merchandise awards. For example, employees will earn \$4 cash when they lease a GSU light to a customer and a \$20 cash bonus on referrals for qualifying heat pumps, electric resistance heating and electric water heating. Gulf Staters can also earn merchandise awards when customers are referred for electric equipment, all electric structures, Good Cents homes, etc. See the February **Plain Talks** for more details on Reddy Referrals Pay.

PLAIN TALKS

January 1989

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Employees who change residences or offices should fill out company mailing-address-forms (GSU0012-00-81) and return them to the mailroom in the Edison Plaza. GSU publications, departmental mailings and other company information are not automatically forwarded; addresses must be corrected when employees move.

Santa comes to Pippa Passes

by Betty Gavora

"It was two weeks before Christmas. I looked at those little children — ragged, hollow-cheeked, sad eyes. They would have no Christmas. No toys, no decorations, no celebration.

"Then I thought of my own grandkids and how much they had. I had to do something."

Bob Dawson talks about the "Good Morning America" television program that December day in 1987 which gave him a new mission in his retirement. Somehow, somehow he was going to get to those children deep in the Appalachian hollows of Kentucky with clothes, toys and food to brighten their next Christmas.

The former Baton Rouge Gas Department employee decided to learn about the mountain people, how they lived and what they needed. Through area churches he made contact with the Rev. Larry Baldridge, pastor of Caney Baptist

Church, in Pippa Passes, Ky. Soon Dawson was on his way to see for himself.

"That was an eye-opening experience," recalls Dawson. "I had never seen such abject poverty. Families with six and eight children were living in one- or two-room frame houses, some covered with tar paper."

As Rev. Baldridge drove Dawson through places like Onion Hollow, Trace Hollow and Bugger Branch Hollow, he learned that these are proud people who survive on \$6,000 to \$8,000 a year, plus food stamps. They are handy with pick and shovel, but the coal mines which once supplied them with jobs are mechanized and do not need them now.

When the church in Pippa Passes has clothing available, the people with any money at all insist on paying a quarter or two for the items they select. It's a matter of pride.

Dawson returned to Baton Rouge and told others what he had seen and heard. Soon clothing, toys and food from Gulf Staters and people in area communities poured in, so much so that it took a 26 ft. long moving van to take everything to Pippa Passes the first week in September.

Dawson's wife, Gladys, sorted clothing of each type and size into 20-lb. plastic garbage bags. She says, "Our bags filled the church storage building in Pippa Passes, but by the middle of November the supply had been depleted."

What about toys? Dawson answers, "We filled two pick-up trucks with boxes of toys — everything you could imagine — dolls, trucks,

Left, part of a quilt made by the ladies in Pippa Passes. Right, families of six or eight live in houses like this.



Rev. Larry Baldridge pastors this church in Pippa Passes which distributed clothes, toys and food.

bicycles, stuffed animals. They put those away for Christmas."

The middle of December the church had a Christmas party and handed out the toys to the kids who came. Then students from a nearby college passed out the remaining toys in the hollows. This Christmas there weren't quite so many sad-eyed kids in Pippa Passes.

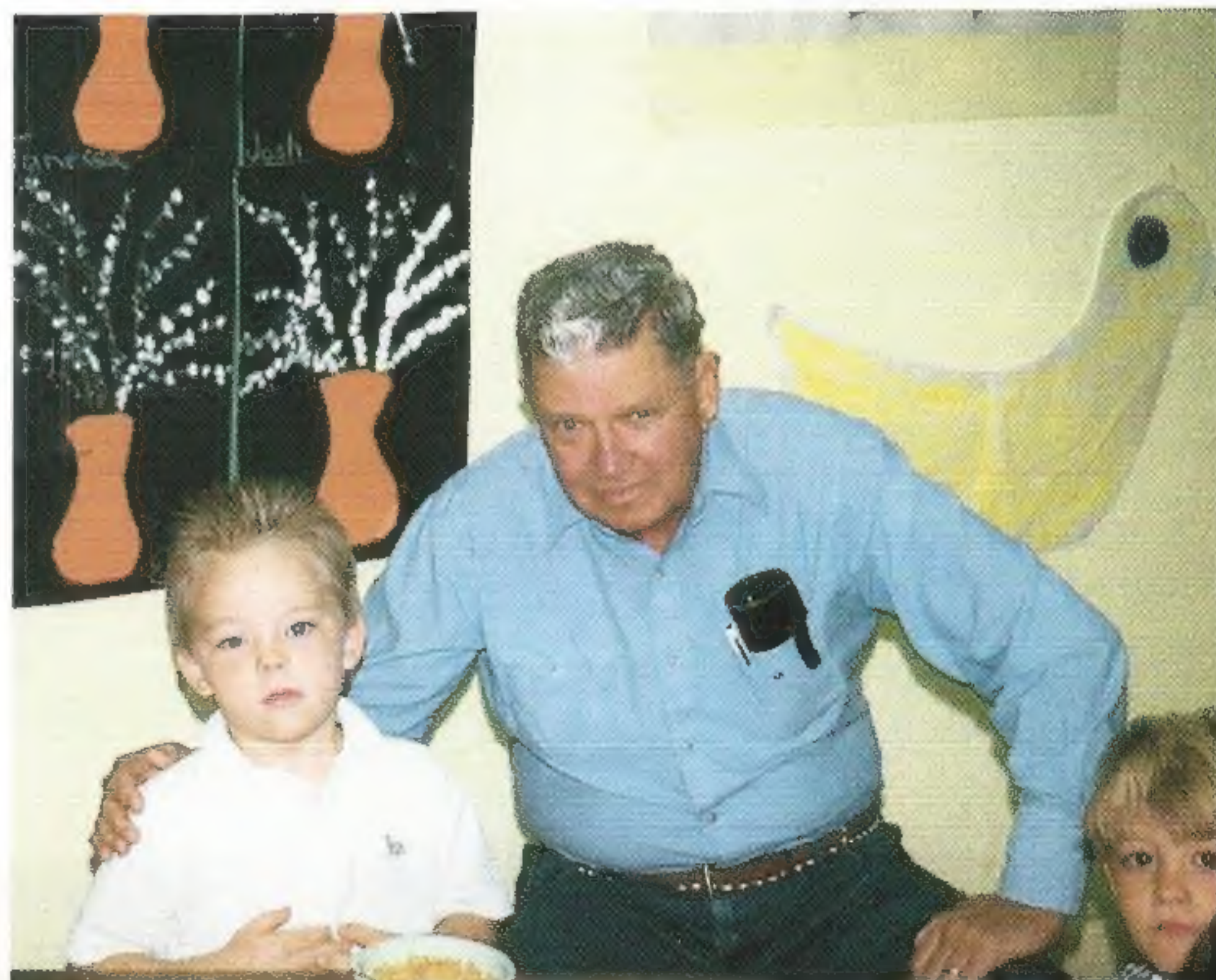
TRACE HOLLOW ON CHRISTMAS EVE

by Larry Baldridge

*Trace is a northy hollow,
With ice all winter long.
And a lonely moon on Mary's Point
And owls a druid's song.
And foxes go a-prowling the meridian
of the sky*

*While hollow hounds are howling
and stars are streaming by.*

*Trace is a northy hollow
Where pines and cedars grow.
And a lonely moon on Mary's Point
Where the northy ice-winds blow,
And people there lie sleeping
And dream of sun and spring
While the graveyard pines are keeping
Silent vigil for their King.*



Retiree Bob Dawson with some of the mountain children.

Employees show Christmas spirit by gifts to children, the needy

by Scott Harper

Everyday we are urged by individuals, groups and advertisements to contribute to some cause. We see these needs on television, in the streets, at work, on billboards, and we hear them on the radio. Many of these causes can make a difference for the better in people's lives.

The humanitarian efforts of some GSU employees at Christmas time have made a difference. From Western Division to Baton Rouge Division, employees organized Christmas projects to aid area families and children. Without the willingness to give and the spirit to volunteer, these programs would not have been possible.

The December 1987 issue of *Plain Talks* highlighted different Christmas projects for the needy throughout the GSU service area. We thought you would like to know what happened with some of those projects. Following are only three examples of many happy stories, as a result of Gulf Staters giving from their hearts.

Port Arthur Division

In 1987, employees from Sabine Station and the Port Arthur Division adopted 12 children from the

Hughen Center for Physically Handicapped Children. These are children who have no place to go for Christmas.

Employees raised over \$2,000. "We wildly exceeded our dreams," says Teresa George, PBX operator, Port Arthur.

"There was almost 100 percent participation in the project," says George, "It was really everyone, not just one, who gave."

In 1988 the employees adopted the Hughen Center children again. "There was no question about it," says George, "We wanted to do the same thing again."

Dorothy Garry, Hughen Center principal, said last year was a wonderful experience for the children. "There were more lights in their eyes than on the Christmas tree," chuckles Garry, "There were happy noises and laughter from mounds of wrapping paper."

Since the response this year was so good, a portion of the money was designated as a birthday fund so the kids can have Christmas year-round.

"The gifts from GSU employees have made this one of the most wonderful times in the lives of these children," says Garry.



(L to R) Susan Naquin, Hughen Center Assistant Director; Troy Missildine, Hughen Center student; and George.

Western Division

The Reddy Team, a volunteer employee group, made Christmas brighter for 13 families with 42 children and two senior citizens in 1987. "We were able to spend \$75 to \$100 on each child," says Renee Stone, customer affairs coordinator, Conroe.

Stone contacts needy families in the area that she has encountered throughout the year. A letter is sent asking for the name and clothing sizes of all family members and the children are asked to send a letter to Santa Claus. "When we receive letters, each department in the division takes on a family," says Stone.

Distributing the items to the families proved to be quite emotional. "It was very, very touching," says Bobbie Burke, secretary-executive, Conroe. "The families were so appreciative, it makes you thankful that you can share." Mark Fruge, engineering helper, Conroe, says, "It makes you not gripe about things we take for granted."

All three employees helped with distribution and said the families were very thankful. "The parents were crying," says Fruge. "They couldn't stop thanking us." Burke



Left, Estelle Robertson and daughter.
Above, (l to r) Fruge, Burke and Stone
review letters sent to the Reddy Team.

adds, "The kids were so excited, you could tell it meant a lot to them."

Other businesses in the area got involved for the third year in a row by asking the Reddy Team for families they could sponsor.

Stone admits they were not able to reach as many people as they would have liked. "There are so many needy people out there," says Stone.

But the Reddy Team was hard at work in 1988 assisting more families.

Baton Rouge Division

Division employees continued a tradition of preparing food baskets for needy families. For Christmas, employees collected nonperishable food items and cash to make the food baskets. Turkeys were bought for each basket from the donated money.

Kutay Mahoney, customer contact clerk, Baton Rouge and Christmas Basket Drive chairman, says, "The 1987 Christmas Basket Drive was a tremendous success.

Through the persistent efforts of the Christmas Basket Committee and generous gifts of GSU employees, we beat our goal of 50 baskets

with a total of 66 baskets.

"Collectors and servicemen did a fantastic job delivering all the food in one day."

Families were very thankful to GSU for the assistance during the holiday season.

Ms. Estelle Robertson, a basket recipient, expresses her appreciation for employees' concern, "It was enough food to feed my family of six children and three adults. It was nice to know somebody cared and I want to thank the GSU employees."

Corinne Williams, another recipient, said, "It felt nice to see that GSU cared about the community. I felt thankful when I was able to feed my children a nice Christmas dinner."

Odessa Jackson's basket was unexpected. "I was a little surprised to see the Christmas basket from GSU. It was very nice and plenty enough food to feed my family of five children and myself," says Jackson.

Employees benefited from the project as well. In a note to Mahoney, Dempsey Raymond, stenographer-senior, writes, "It was really a blessing for me to be able to take part in something so worthwhile."

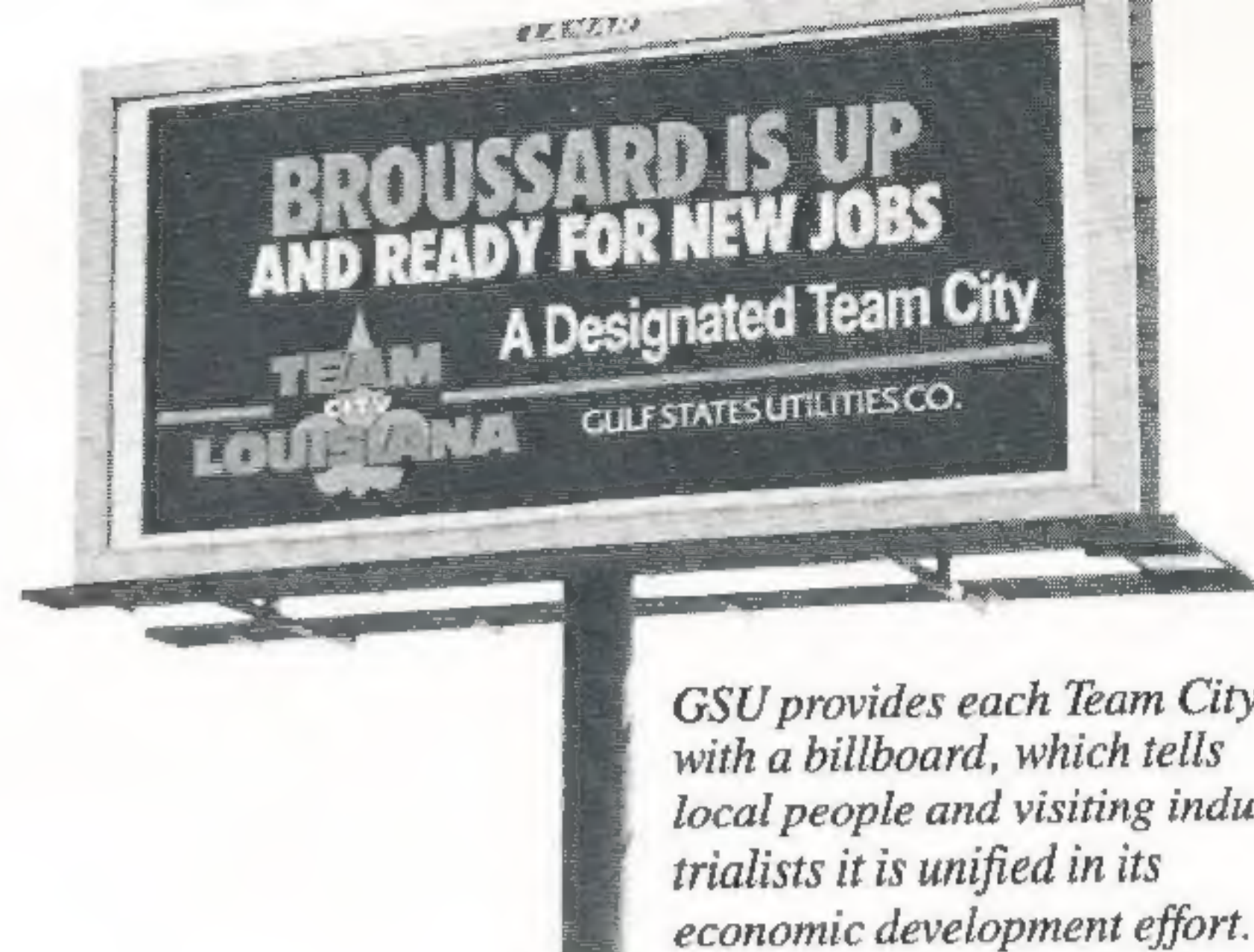
In 1988 the tradition continued. Mahoney said, "This year I got a little bold and set the goal at 100 baskets. God bless them all."



Odessa Jackson and daughter.

GSU and Team Cities — partners for new jobs, economic development

Story and photos by Robert Adams



GSU provides each Team City with a billboard, which tells local people and visiting industrialists it is unified in its economic development effort.

Near a highway in Louisiana, a row of four iron gears, each as tall as a man and painted a pure color like those of a rainbow, stands partially buried. At the row's end, a steam engine, similarly painted, completes a landmark to a bygone era. Now, James "Tex" Plumley uses the mill components, which once crushed and refined sugar cane into pure, white sweetness, to direct visitors to the office of Billeaud Companies in Broussard. "You can't miss it," he says of his office behind the gears, a house built before the turn of the century.

In 1979, the oil and gas business boomed in Broussard. Nearby New Iberia produced sugar, so the owners of Broussard's sugar factory shut it down and dismantled it. "At the time," says Plumley,

"Broussard was the growth path of Lafayette," with plans for subdivisions and developed communities. Then the oil and gas industry slowed and so did Broussard's economy. Plumley, Billeaud Companies' chief executive officer, heads up Broussard's economic development committee, which looks to stimulate new business. "Now we have to create things for ourselves," says Plumley. To accomplish this, Broussard has teamed up with GSU to attract new industry by using GSU's Team City program.

In recent years, Broussard, like many small communities in GSU's service area, participated in state-sponsored community development programs. However, budget difficulties forced Texas and Louisiana to cancel them. GSU's marketing group, realizing their value, created the Team City program to continue training small communities to market themselves.

Team City furthers GSU's effort to market the communities we serve, which Dr. Linn Draper, chairman and president, says is "unquestionably one of the most important services GSU can provide its customers." The additional revenues, generated by the economic growth of our service area will help hold down the need for future rate increases, he adds.

"Anymore, economic development is a team effort," says John Bordelon, administrator - community development, who guides Team City. "Over the years, we have learned a great deal about

what industrialists list in their decision making process, like taxes or transportation. But we have also learned that new business and industry want to locate in a unified community, one with a receptive attitude."

Team City develops a community by linking the efforts of GSU and community leaders to market our area to prospective businesses and industries which might relocate here.

It combines a community's knowledge of itself and GSU's knowledge of national and international marketing. The program requires a community to honestly evaluate its marketability and prepare for visits by industry prospects. Then GSU finds prospects and steers them toward the communities who participate in the program.

Larry Woodall, section head - relay, is mayor of Lumberton, Texas, north of Beaumont. In 1986, Lumberton formed its own economic development group. Woodall says it went through many changes before GSU's Marketing Department approached it.

"We were receptive to GSU," says Woodall, "because we realized our resources were very limited. We needed to go a step further to get out information about Lumberton. Team City provided the perfect outlet for us.

"We provided information to GSU about schools, city government, taxes, land, sites and our work force," says Woodall. "What we didn't have was a network of



Plumley, holding Broussard's own economic development brochure, prepares a presentation.



Woodall displays an advertisement, which will appear in a local newspaper, proclaiming Lumberton to be a Team City.

contacts. GSU's Economic Development group was very organized, with contacts across the nation. There was no way we could have had those."

Bordelon says a local GSU superintendent probably knows his community better than anyone else. His position with GSU allows him to guide the community through the program, which requires commitment from those wishing to participate.

After adopting a resolution endorsing and supporting the program, the community selects a committee to gather information in a minimum of 20 major categories of the community framework. Using this information, the community sets goals which address needs, such as water and sewer systems, or streets and parks.

The community selects a marketing team, a group of leaders to market it to new and existing business and industry. GSU, along with state agencies, trains the marketing team. The training concludes with a simulated visit by an industrial prospect. "GSU trained over 20 individuals from our community," says Woodall, "in how to work with business, how to approach business, how to provide informa-

tion, what to do and what not to do."

After the community completes the training, GSU presents it with a certificate proclaiming it to be a Team City. The certificate tells the world the community is ready to accept expanding business and industry.

Then GSU's marketing effort promotes the Team City worldwide. We include Team Cities in advertising and computer listings, both nationally and internationally. We report to Team Cities about prospects who will visit our service area. We produce brochures about our Team City communities and help them plan direct mail projects to new businesses.

GSU will requalify a Team City every two years, after reviewing such things as current building and site availability, finance packaging, business retention and small business development. In addition, the marketing team will undergo a simulation retraining as part of the community's re-qualification.

Thirty-one cities and communities currently participate in the program, which GSU began this year. Seven have completed marketing training and Gulf States has declared them as Team Cities.



This brochure, produced by Gulf States, describes the Team City program and is available through Marketing.

Audrey McDonald



Kelley Carson, marketing agent, Orange, received The Business Man of the Month award in August from the Bridge City Chamber of Commerce. Carson, chairman of the Bridge City Ambassadors, was recognized for his role in organizing a men's softball tournament as a benefit to help Bridge City citizens build a public library. The tournament attracted 14 teams and raised \$1,902.65.

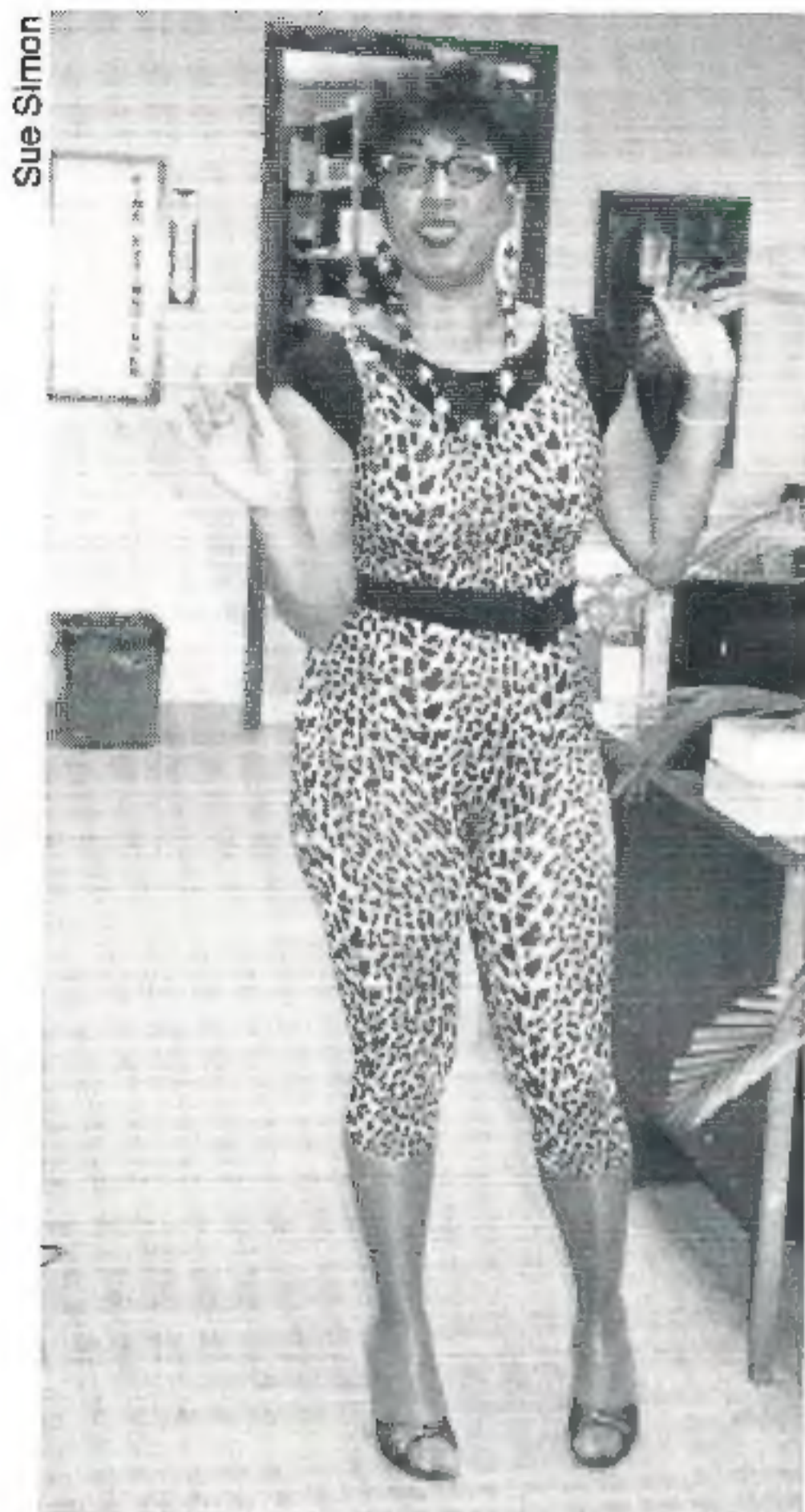


Col. Leslie G. Calder, U.S. Army Reserve, received the Legion of Merit Award on Sept. 10 at Camp Mabry in Austin. Calder, senior power interconnections engineer, Beaumont, also received the Lone Star Distinguished Service Medal, an award rarely given to anyone outside the Texas National Guard. Calder served for 30 years and retired in his assignment as Army Liaison Officer in Austin. James T. Dennis, Adjutant General of Texas, writes, "Colonel Calder's dedication and professional ability have reflected exceptionally outstanding credit upon himself, this command, and the United States Army." At the ceremonies in Austin are (l to r) Dennis, Calder and wife, Arvella.

Tommy Allen



Gonzales now has the largest Wal-Mart in the South. Tommy Allen, senior district service representative, Gonzales, was on location for the installation of 23 heating and air units. The units were lifted and set by helicopter. The new 114,557 sq. ft. store is a boost for Gonzales and GSU ... it is all electric.



Hilton Jones, Jr., repairman-1st class, Neches Station, participated in a two-day bike race to raise money for the American Lung Association. He raised \$201 from the employees at Neches Station. The 190-mile race was held in San Antonio on Oct. 15-16 with 694 people participating



Edison Plaza eighth floor employees enjoyed a cookout at the home of Jim and Becky Moss in recognition of the group's contribution to United Way. The eighth floor took top honors at Edison Plaza with 100 percent participation and 68 percent Fair Share contributors. (L to R) Jim Moss, vice president-marketing; Elaine Pumphrey; Don Pumphrey, senior public affairs representative; and Sharon Englade, coordinator-corporate communications, all of Beaumont, share conversation at the party.

GSU employee impersonators? No, it's Port Arthur Division employees in disguise for Halloween. Dressing up the office that day were: (top left) Jocelyn "Laverne" Kaufman, customer contact clerk; (top right) Jeri "California Raisin" Watson, part time clerical; (bottom left) Adela "M&M" Martinez, departmental clerk; and (bottom right) Tookie "Lily Munster" Schamber, customer contact clerk.

WEIGHT LOSS SABOTAGE

How to Combat "Diet" Relapse

You've been watching your weight, exercising regularly, and paying attention to your eating habits and food choices. Your combined efforts are paying off—you're meeting your weight-loss goals. But then it happens—something or someone—distracts you from your goals. Your weight loss is sabotaged, and the pounds begin to add up again. What do you do? Give up? Resign yourself to being heavier than you'd like? Neither. You can learn how to combat "diet" relapse and take charge of your weight.

Know the "Enemy"

Before you effectively deal with "diet" relapse, it helps to know the situations that are most likely to make you lose sight of your weight-loss goals—a stressful situation, a special celebration, an in-laws' visitation? Perhaps it's just an unavoidable temptation—your hostess's prize cheesecake, your mother's Sunday feast, your daughter's Girl Scout cookies. Whatever it is, knowing the "enemy" is the first step to winning the battle—and the war.

Prepare an Action Plan

Once you know your personal weight-loss saboteurs, you can prepare to deal with them *before* they undermine your goals. It can help to actually rehearse how you'll handle these situations when they arise. Stand in front of a mirror and

act out the script with the ending *you* choose. "If I start feeling too tense, I'll count to ten and take five deep breaths instead of grabbing something to eat." "I'll fill up on fresh vegetables at home before I go to the party so I won't be hungry and tempted to eat when I get there." "Thank you, Janice, the cheesecake looks wonderful as usual, but I'll have to take a raincheck this time." "Mother, dinner was great, but I'm so full I can't take another bite."

Remember, the nature of temptations is that they are hard to resist—hard, but not impossible. By developing personal strategies to deal with difficult situations and alluring temptations, *you* can sabotage your saboteurs.

Retreat—Not Defeat

Sometimes temptations can be so great that even a well-thought-out action plan fails to curb your impulse to give in. When that happens, retreat! If you can't remove the temptation itself, remove yourself. If you must buy the Girl Scout cookies, donate them to a local food bank, or make a donation to the Girl Scouts and forget the cookies. Leave the buffet if it's too hard to resist, and take a brisk walk. Get up from the dinner table and offer to clear dishes (instead of the dessert plate.) If you can't pass the bakery without stopping for a pastry, don't pass the bakery—take another route! These are just a few suggestions—why not try to develop some of your own? You're doing something *good* for



Combat diet relapse by discovering your personal weight loss saboteurs.

yourself when you decide to control your weight, so make your weight loss plan as easy on yourself as possible.

Winning the War

You can still win the war against diet relapse even when you do give in to a momentary temptation. Just remember that going off your weight control plan temporarily is not the end of the world! As the saying goes "To err is human, to forgive is divine," so forgive yourself if you have a relapse. Then, just pick up where you left off and give yourself a fresh start—you're worth it!

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MAILBOX



Deserves respect

In a letter to Al Dragg, superintendent, Gonzales, LaVerne Brown, Gonzales customer, writes to thank **Clifford Johnson**, lineman-1st class, for helping his son when a tree fell on his house.

"It could have been a potentially dangerous situation, but with the prompt and expert response from your company man, Mr. Clifford Johnson, my fears were soon erased ... This man was very helpful, polite and most understanding. He handled his job in a very safe and efficient manner ... Men that work under these dangerous and stressful conditions deserve the respect of all the people they service."



Clifford Johnson

Better understanding

Jamie Timphomy, director of the Calcasieu Day Camp of the Bayou Girl Scout Council, writes to **Edward Brawner**, senior district service repairman, Sulphur:

"Thank you very much for helping out at our Girl Scout Day Camp. Our girls now have a better understanding of conserving our utilities and resources."

Thanks for the help

Charlene Jeter Fairchild, Lake Charles customer, writes in appreciation of Project Care:

"Thanks so much for the help when I so desperately needed it. I tried to get my husband to participate in Project Care when it first started and he wouldn't! Now he sees that anyone might need it, through no fault of their own (which wasn't ours). Thanks again."

Best wishes

Robert Dawson, Baton Rouge Gas Department retiree, received this letter from Louisiana Governor Buddy Roemer:

"I want to take this opportunity to express my personal best wishes to you and to all who have given of themselves to brighten the lives of the poor children of Kentucky."

"Far too many of us, when confronted by the poverty and injustices that mar our world, despair, and so do nothing. Then there are those like you, who know their inability to save the entire world does not lift from the shoulders of each of us the responsibility to make the world a better place. It has been said that God created the human race with, at first, only one person, so that we might know that to save one person is as if one had saved the entire world. Clearly, you and your friends understand this very well."

(See the related story on page 3.)

Promoting safety

"I want to compliment Gulf States Utilities for their safety program ... concerning cables, transformers, etc.," writes Patrick F. Harris, Lewis Vincent Elementary principal, Denham Springs, to **Huey Stafford**, superintendent, Denham Springs.

"The men did a very good job of explaining to our first and second graders the dangers of electricity and, what to do if they are ever faced with certain dangerous situations concerning electricity."

Mike Wheat, lineman-1st class, heads up the safety program in the Denham Springs area.

Reddy Referrals logo design contest winners



Reddy Referrals Pay

ATTENTION All GSU Employees



Reddy Referrals Pay

Reddy Referrals



PAY

Reddy Kilowatt cuts his eyes in our direction, moves his left hand upward as he extends his index finger forward, and steps out with his left foot — like a drum major leading a band. He is surrounded by such sales possibilities as water heaters, security lights, all electric homes and heat pumps. We glance at him once more and notice a broad smile on his face which seems to say, "Let's go."

We're looking at the winning entry (see back cover of this issue) in the Reddy Referral logo

design contest, which earned Karen McConnell, associate systems analyst, Beaumont, an 1,800-watt electric barbecue grill valued at \$100.

Shown above are the entries of the runners-up in the company-wide contest. From left are drawings submitted by Charlotte Gautreau, customer contact clerk, Gonzales; Matthew Thomas, supervisor-Credit/Collections, Conroe; and Laurie Cobbs, departmental clerk, Neches Station.

"Response to the contest was

great," exclaims Bobbie Ireland, commercial development analyst, Beaumont. "We're aiming to get all employees involved with marketing through the Reddy Referrals Pay Program."

Ireland explains the program will kick off in February. Through the Reddy Referrals program employees will be asked to keep their eyes open for sales opportunities for electrical equipment to increase GSU's load. Employees will simply make a note of the potential customer's name and address, and

send the referral to GSU Marketing personnel, who will make the sales contact.

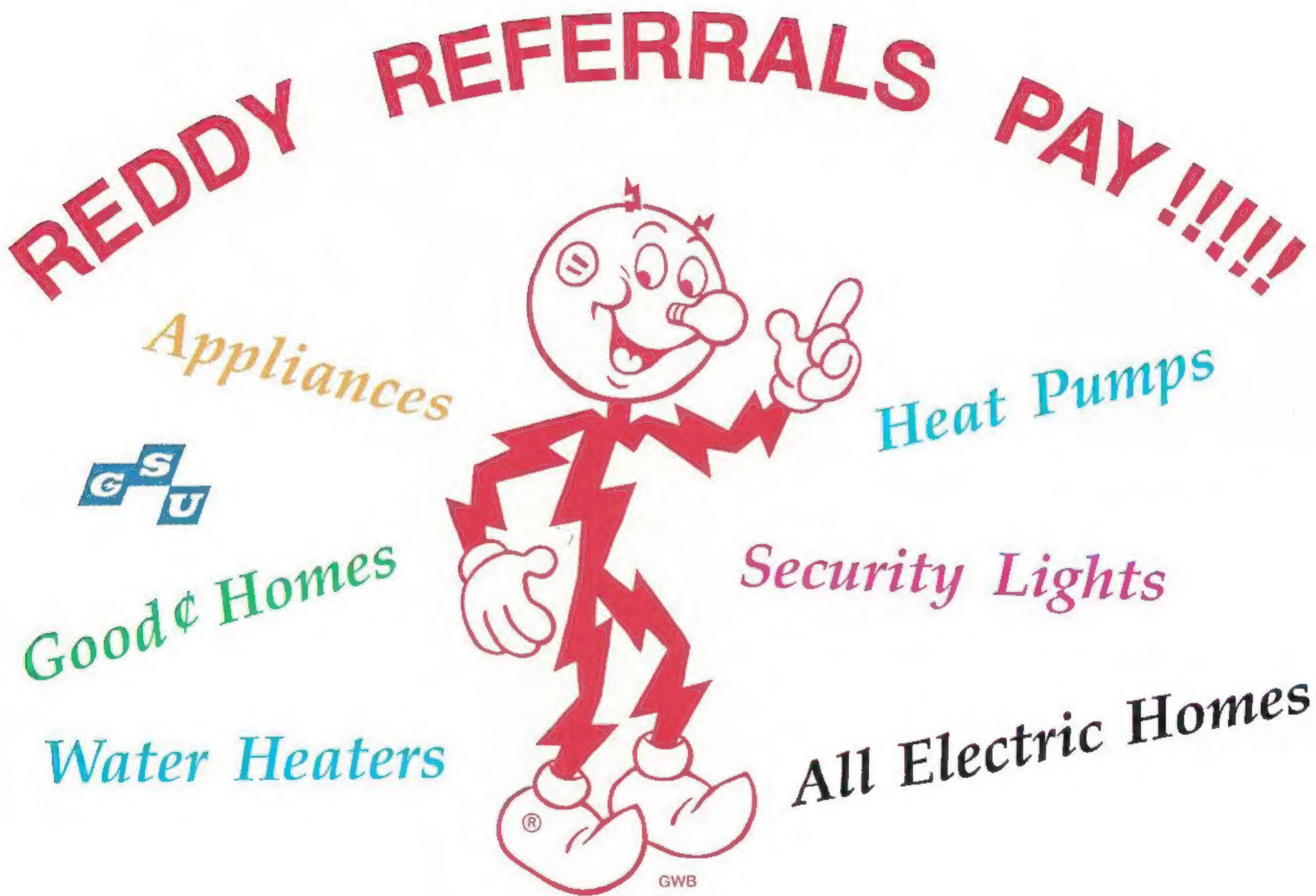
"Meter readers, collectors, customer accounting clerks, servicemen, engineering assistants and others are in touch with the customer everyday. They can help us 'watch' for those possibilities Reddy has around him in the winning logo," says Ireland.

PLAIN TALKS

P. O. Box 2951
Beaumont, Texas 77704

Address Correction Requested

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Beaumont, Texas
Permit No. 11



Watch for Possibilities!!